

What is claimed is:

1. A method of defining a customizable asset metadata file usable by a web-based asset management application, comprising:
  - a. providing an asset metadata template for an asset type in an Extensible Markup Language (“XML”) schema file, the XML schema file comprising a description of metadata fields and corresponding field type and field length for the asset type;
  - b. providing an XSL asset creation process stylesheet file that can be used with an XML schema file, the XSL asset creation process stylesheet file adapted to traverse the XML schema file and create a form displayed in a user interface based on a field specified in the XML schema file; and
  - c. providing an XSL asset metadata layout stylesheet, the XSL asset metadata layout stylesheet further comprising an XSL asset metadata display definition for an asset type in the XSL asset metadata layout stylesheet.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the XML schema file further comprises a specifier to signify at least one of (a) whether a field is optional or searchable or both or (b) whether an asset can be handled by a media player through the browser.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the XML schema file comprises a description of metadata fields and corresponding field type and field length for each asset type of a plurality of asset types.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein providing the XML schema file further comprises providing a plurality of XML schema files.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein each XML schema file is associatable with a specified asset type.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the XSL asset metadata layout stylesheet comprises layout information useful for displaying metadata for a specified asset type.
7. The method of claim 6, wherein the layout information further comprises a designator indicative of which fields should be displayed to a user that is creating a new asset or modifying an existing asset's metadata.
8. A web-based asset management system, comprising:
  - a. an asset metadata template for an asset type in an XML schema file, the XML schema file comprising a description of metadata fields and corresponding field type and field length for the asset type;
  - b. an XSL asset creation process stylesheet file that can be used with an XML schema file, the XSL asset creation process stylesheet file adapted to traverse the XML schema file and create a form displayed in a user interface based on a field specified in the XML schema file;
  - c. an XSL asset metadata layout stylesheet, the XSL asset metadata layout stylesheet further comprising an XSL asset metadata display definition for an asset type in the XSL asset metadata layout stylesheet; and
  - d. a web-based application adapted to utilize the asset metadata XML schema file and the XSL asset creation process stylesheet file when performing an XSL transformation that displays an input form for a user to enter asset metadata information.
9. The web-based asset management system of claim 8, wherein the XML schema file comprises a description of metadata fields and corresponding field type and field length for each asset type of a plurality of asset types.

10. The web-based asset management system of claim 8, wherein the XSL transformation further comprises display of a metadata field for defined assets of a specific asset type for user manipulation of stored metadata.
11. The web-based asset management system of claim 9, wherein the manipulation comprises at least one of (a) review or (b) modification.
12. The web-based asset management system of claim 8, the Web-based application is further adapted to:
  - a. perform data validation on user data; and
  - b. store asset metadata into the XML database.
13. The web-based asset management system of claim 8, wherein the XML database comprises at least one of (a) one collection per asset type per customer or (b) one collection for a specific asset type for a given customer, the collection further comprising a list of asset metadata XML files.
14. The web-based asset management system of claim 8, wherein the web-based application is further adapted to utilize a searchable field defined in the asset metadata XML schema for a specific asset type to allow a user to search for assets based on the metadata defined in the XML schema for that asset type.
15. The web-based asset management system of claim 8, wherein the web-based asset application is further adapted to utilize the asset metadata XML file and the associated asset metadata display XSL file for that asset type to display the asset's metadata in a graphical user interface (GUI).
16. The web-based asset management system of claim 8, wherein the web-based application is further adapted to utilize the asset metadata XML Schema file to access the asset.

17. The web-based asset management system of claim 16, wherein, for assets that are previewable, access is at least one of (a) viewing the asset at a display using the browser or (b) hearing the asset using the browser that further launches a media player or other helper application in response to the access.